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3 Shoppers Shot Dead

N.Y. Times Service

Raleigh, N.C.

A gunman sprayed a crowd at a suburban Raleigh shopping center yesterday with rifle fire, killing three shoppers and wounding seven other persons before turning the weapon on himself.

An aide to United States Senator Everett Jordan was one of those seriously wounded as he accompanied the Senator through the North Hills Shopping Mall on a noontime handshaking tour.

Jordan, a 75-year-old conservative Democrat who is campaigning for renomination, was not injured. The police said the Senator apparently was not the target of the bullets and that his presence in the mall at the time of the shootings was coincidental.

Investigators said the shootings were apparently the work of a single individual, Harvey McLeod, a 22-year-old black school janitor. The police found his body, with a bullet wound in the head, slumped between cars in the parking lot of the shopping center after the five-minute outburst of fire ended.

SUICIDE

The police said McLeod, who reportedly had suffered blackouts as a child, took his own life with a .22 caliber semi-automatic rifle he had purchased earlier in the day.

No motive for the shootings could be immediately

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SHOPPING MALL

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provided and the police said it apparently was the work of one man who had become deranged.

They said that the sniper opened fire shortly after the noon hour as Memorial Day shoppers streamed into the sun-splotched North Hills mall in search of holiday sales bargains.

As the shots rang out from the parking lot, the bewildered shoppers watched as several victims slumped to the ground.

SENATOR

Jordan had entered the shopping mall moments before, but several of his aides were getting campaign literature from a parked car when the firing began, according to Lucius Pullen, a Raleigh attorney who said he saw the sniper.

"I saw them falling all around me and then realized somebody was shooting. I dropped and crawled inside the mall," Pullen said.

"I saw a big, hulking man standing above the car. He bent down and calmly reloaded his gun, just like he was standing in a field reloading. Then he raised up his rifle and started shooting again."

Nearby, Wesley Hayden, the Senator's press secretary, collapsed with a bullet in his chest.

DEAD

The police identified the dead as:

Mrs. Jackie Wharton, 47 years old; James G. Henry, 31, and Melvin D. Harrison Jr., 23. All were white and lived in Raleigh, the police said.

Among the wounded were two girls, 6 and 3 years old.

Pullen said he saw the sniper fire at a group of women that Senator Jordan had spoken to moments before entering the mall.

"I have no reason to believe anyone would try to kill me," Senator Jordan said later. Jordan had finished second in his race for renomination in the May 6 Democratic primary, finishing behind U.S. Representative Nick Galfianakis of Durham. The race will be decided in a runoff election this Saturday.

CARTRIDGES

Truman Rhodes, assistant Wake county coroner, said that three boxes of cartridges were found on McLeod's body.

"We don't know how long the man had been there, but he had a .22 rifle that he had bought this morning," said Raleigh Police Chief Robert W. Goodwin. The chief said he believed that the shooting was not related to Senator Jordan's handshaking tour, which had not been publicly advertised.

The alleged assailant's mother, Mrs. Willie McLeod, later said that her son had shown no signs of abnormal behavior in recent years. He had taken a job as a janitor at a local high school recently after holding several of the jobs for short periods of time.

She said, however, that he had suffered blackouts when he was about ten years of age, and she had taken him to Duke University Hospital in Durham for observation. But she said she had objected to tests that physicians there wanted to conduct on her son because she "didn't want anybody messing with his head."

Friends of McLeod remembered him as a lonely boy who was left out of group activities, although he did play varsity sports at J. W. Ligon High School.